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Afghanistan: Status of the Insurgency  
Talking Points for the DCI  
11 October 1983

Fighting in Afghanistan will continue near current levels over the next few years, barring a drastic change in Soviet policy. Increasing insurgent effectiveness and the problems of the Soviet and Afghan military do not threaten Soviet control but do raise Soviet costs. [redacted]

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The Afghan insurgents have been seriously threatening urban security and maintained intense pressure on convoys and military posts. Since the invasion, Soviet costs have been considerable, according to our estimates [redacted]:

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- Some 17,000 Soviets have been killed or wounded in Afghanistan. The Afghan Army has suffered 50,000 casualties and nearly 80,000 men have deserted.
- The insurgents have destroyed some 370 Soviet and Afghan aircraft (mostly helicopters) and nearly 150 more have been lost in accidents.
- Approximately 10,000 Soviet and Afghan armored vehicles and trucks have been destroyed or damaged.
- Direct Soviet costs since the invasion probably total around \$12 billion. [redacted]

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The Soviets are becoming more concerned about their difficulties in coping with the resistance. Soviet casualties and air losses are substantially up over the levels of last year. Improvements in insurgent air defenses are forcing Soviet aircraft to use evasive tactics that reduce their effectiveness. [redacted]

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We judge that the insurgents will become more politically sophisticated and militarily effective in the next two to three years, but they will remain vulnerable.

- The most serious threat to the resistance is civilian war-weariness and loss of popular support over the long term.
- Cooperation among insurgent bands has grown, but because of deep ideological and religious differences a united resistance movement in the next few years is unlikely.
- The Soviets and the Kabul regime are likely to continue attempts to arrange local truces and encourage defections. [redacted]

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The Soviets probably will continue to practice a strategy of attrition. To maintain even current levels of security, however, Moscow may have to consider at least small-scale reinforcements. [redacted]

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**SUBJECT: Afghanistan: Status of the Insurgency**

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